



UGANDA

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Population, Health, and Nutrition Briefing Sheet

Country Profile

Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa with a population of approximately 20 million. Over the last decade, Uganda has transformed itself from a pariah state into one of the world's best performing economies and a potential model for African development. The country boasts a rich and diverse natural resource and agricultural base. Uganda was among the first countries in Africa to be hit hard by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has significantly lowered life expectancy.

USAID Strategy

USAID is helping to improve the health status of Ugandans through a focused program that promotes integrated HIV/AIDS prevention, family planning, and reproductive and child health services. USAID's goals are to reduce fertility, HIV transmission, and maternal and child mortality levels by:

- improving the availability and quality of health services;
- increasing knowledge and promoting appropriate attitudes related to reproductive, maternal, and child health; and
- enhancing the financial sustainability of primary health care services.

Major Program Areas

Family Planning/Reproductive Health Training and Service Delivery. USAID has helped Uganda develop standardized, high-quality reproductive health curricula to train health workers nationwide. This training prepares doctors, nurses, and midwives in safe delivery techniques, obstetrical emergencies, and family planning services. Improved supervision systems have been developed to support health facility staff and community volunteers.

Contraceptive Social Marketing. USAID supports development of appropriate mass media messages and campaigns marketing condoms, pills, and injectable contraceptives. These efforts provide Ugandans with critical

information to improve health, family planning, and HIV prevention behaviors.

HIV/AIDS Prevention. USAID is a leading donor in HIV/AIDS prevention. The agency supports information, education, and communication programs; condom social marketing; clinical training for syndromic management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs); and efforts to maintain availability of STI drugs and testing services. The mission also helped develop and support model nongovernmental organization (NGO) programs under the AIDS Information Center, which specializes in HIV testing and counseling services, and the AIDS Support Organization, which works with community-based organizations to develop support services for people living with AIDS.

Strengthening Health Finance Systems. USAID supports more effective health care financing to facilitate sustainable health, family planning, and HIV/AIDS programs. Activities are designed to increase revenue generation at public facilities, expand private provision of health care, and improve information systems under the Ministry of Health.

Results

- *Reduced HIV transmission rates among key population groups.* For the fifth consecutive year, HIV prevalence declined among young pregnant women attending antenatal clinics in urban areas, signifying the first sustained drop in HIV prevalence in Africa.
- *Increased knowledge of HIV prevention.* The percent of adults in target districts who know that a condom can be used to prevent HIV infection nearly doubled from just 29 percent in 1995 to 58 percent in 1997, including 67 percent of men.
- *Increased use of modern contraception.* The contraceptive prevalence rate among married women increased from 3 percent in 1988 to 8 percent in 1995. By 1997, a survey in a targeted community found the rate had risen to nearly 20 percent of women, a level high enough to significantly lower fertility rates.



Bureau for Africa

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- *Higher quality health services.* USAID supported integrated training in reproductive and child health for 600 nurses and midwives. USAID's curriculum is now being used in modified form by CARE in its British- and US-funded projects and is being evaluated and adapted for wider use by the Ministry of Health.

Success Stories

- USAID's Contraceptive Social Marketing program has made great strides in facilitating the sustainable supply of condoms and other contraceptives. As the result of expanded distribution and steadily increasing demand, annual condom sales increased dramatically from 1.2 million in 1992 to almost 6 million in 1995, and nearly 10 million in 1996 and 1997. In addition to these sales, millions more condoms are distributed each year by Uganda's Ministry of Health and NGOs supported by USAID.
- The AIDS Information Center (AIC), the premiere HIV testing and counseling organization in Africa, has reached more than a quarter of a million clients and serves as a model for other countries worldwide. In 1997, AIC dramatically expanded the number of sites offering its HIV testing and counseling services from 3 to 17, making these services available in many rural areas for the first time. In addition to rapid, same day HIV testing, AIC's Kampala center has introduced syphilis testing and treatment.
- To improve the financial sustainability of health services, over 220 staff from 27 health units have been trained in fee-for-service policies and accounting procedures. Most units report revenue increases of roughly 30 percent; a pilot district hospital reported an increase of 45 percent in banked fee collections.

women report that they want to delay their next pregnancy by at least two years, but nationwide only about 8 percent are actually using modern family planning. This illustrates a continuing need to expand the availability of modern family planning services and focus on improving educational opportunities for girls. While Uganda has exhibited striking successes in reducing HIV transmission, AIDS remains a serious problem, with the most severe impact occurring among the most economically active. High rates of HIV prevalence also contribute to persistently high rates of infant and child mortality.



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Continuing Challenges

Despite USAID's progress to date in health and family planning in Uganda, a variety of challenges remain. Although improved maternal and child health is a government priority, resource constraints severely limit the government's ability to improve basic services. Rates of fertility and mortality, though declining, remain high. Two-thirds of Ugandan